



March 1, 2016

Dear Education Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support ***Raised Bill 5467; An Act to Establish A Red Ribbon PASS Program.***

This is a program that encourages all schools to imbed physical activity throughout the school day.

Research has shown that students learn and retain information better when they put a movement with their learning. From the day we were born we were meant to move. And so for the first 5 years of our lives we are moving and learning. Then we enter school and we make our students sit quietly in their seats for extended periods of time. It's not a natural thing for children to do. So they fidget and loose interest.

This is where PASS can make a huge difference! If schools are using the PASS initiatives, then students are actively engaged in their learning. By moving while learning, content is reinforced and retained.

New information is processed quicker as oxygen from exercise boosts brain function. Synapses in the brain are firing and making connections during exercise. So why not start your day with a little vigorous exercise? In the study of Naperville Indiana, students attended a class first thing in the morning that got them moving at a moderate to vigorous pace, then attended their hardest subject. Students reported that they could focus better in class, and teachers reported significant increases in academic achievement in those classes. The effects of those 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise lasted well into their second period class.

The philosophy behind PASS is simple. After sitting for 17-20 minutes the brain shuts down and goes to sleep. That's when you infuse a Brain Boost activity to refocus and reenergize the students. Then before you introduce a new subject or tougher content, get the students up and do some stretches or jog in place. This will send oxygen pumping to the brain to help this new learning stick. And when you want to review or check for understanding, make it an activity that links the content to a movement. Teachers state that this short little break takes no time at all and students enjoy the chance to get out of their seats.

Supporting this Raised Bill #5467. An Act to Establish a Red Ribbon PASS Program will give the schools and school systems a chance to be recognized for providing a healthier, active learning environment for their students.

Thank-you for your support and interest in the health of our children and youth,

Sincerely,
Vivian Heyward PhD.

Vivian Heyward

Professor Emeritus of Exercise
University of New Mexico